

## **Custer County FSA**

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### **County Committee Members:**

James Anderson  
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Gail Shaw

### **FSA Office Personnel:**

Dale E. Barta, CED  
Jeff Janshen, FLM  
Colette Butcher, PT  
Jodi Herzog, PT  
Kistia Johnson, PT  
Bo Kombol, FLOT  
Lacy Roberts, FLOT  
Casey Trainer, Field

### **Dates to Remember:**

**August 1** – Reconstitution  
Deadline for FY 2007

**August 1** – COC Nomination forms  
must be returned to county office  
by close of business

**August 3** – Signature deadline on  
2007 Direct and Counter-cyclical  
Program (DCP)

**August 4 - September 28** – DCP  
late filed fee of \$100 will be  
assessed

**September 3** – Holiday, Office  
closed

**September 24-27** – Tribal  
Outreach Forum, Gran Tree,  
Bozeman

**September 28** – Final date for late  
filed 2007 DCP contracts

**October 2 & 3** – Women Stepping  
Forward for Agriculture  
Symposium, Dillon

**November 2** – COC ballots will be  
mailed to eligible voters

**December 3** – Final date to return  
voted COC ballots to FSA office



# **Custer County FSA**

## **August 2007**

### **Custer County Announces Signup for Flood Damage**

Custer County has been approved to implement the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) due to floods that occurred in early June of 2007. The conservation practices approved to correct damage due to the flood include:

EC1 - Removing Debris from Farmland - This practice is used for removing debris from farmland.

EC2- Grading, Shaping, Releveling, or Similar Measures - This practice is used for grading, shaping and leveling land that has been damaged by the flood and is returned to agricultural use.

EC3- Restoring Permanent Fences - This practice corrects damage to fences caused by the flood. Cost share on fences is based upon the age of the fence that is damaged.

EC4 - Restoring Conservation Structures and Other Installations - This practice restores conservation structures and installations damaged by the flood.

Signup for the program begins on July 30th and ends on August 20th.

The Custer County FSA is encouraging producers to call and schedule an appointment so we can prepare some of the application data prior to the appointment.

Eligibility for cost share assistance is based on a minimum of \$1000 of eligible damage. All requests for cost share are subject to the availability of funds.

### **Important –**

**Producers who have already started or completed a practice to repair the damage, must make an appointment and submit your request for cost-share no later than August 14, 2007 in order for your application to be considered for cost-share.**

**No Final 2006 Counter-cyclical Payments for Wheat, Barley and Oats**

FSA will not issue final 2006-crop counter-cyclical payments to farmers enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program (DCP) for wheat, barley and oats. The decision was made due to the fact that prices for these commodities have averaged well above levels that trigger counter-cyclical payments.

Counter-cyclical payments are made at the end of an eligible crop's 12-month marketing year. The 2002 Farm Bill provides for the availability of two partial counter-cyclical payments. USDA did not issue a first or second partial payment for the 2006 crop of wheat, barley or oats due to strong markets.

The counter-cyclical payment rate is the amount by which the "target price" of each commodity, specified by the 2002 Farm Bill, exceeds its effective price. The effective price equals the direct payment rate plus the higher of either: 1) the national average market price received by producers during the marketing year; or 2) the national average loan rate for the commodity.

For each commodity, the counter-cyclical payment for each crop year equals 85 percent of the farm's base acreage times the farm's counter-cyclical payment yield times the counter-cyclical payment rate.

**2007 Tribal Outreach Forum**

The USDA State FAC in cooperation with the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), 1994 Land Grant Tribal Colleges and Universities, Tribal Governments and Tribal organizations from across Montana will host a Tribal Outreach Forum at the Gran Tree Inn, in Bozeman, MT September 24-27, 2007.

The conference registration fee is \$35 which will be waived for individual Tribal producers who attend. A limited amount of scholarship funds is available.

If interested in applying for a scholarship, a registration form or an agenda, contact the FSA office for further details.

**Beginning, Small and Limited Resource Farmers: Do You Require Financial Assistance to Fund Conservation Program Initiatives?**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and FSA have worked cooperatively to make USDA programs more available and readily accessible to beginning, small, and limited resource producers.

As many producers move from the initial contract development of especially the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), many face the inability to acquire the initial capital investment for their cost-share portion needed for contract implementation. Even with increased cost-share rates, the challenge of providing the up-front share may present problems to full contract implementation.

USDA provides some options. FSA has several loan programs available that may help with the upfront costs associated with program implementation. Use of FSA loan programs, in conjunction with conservation programs, has the potential to improve the effectiveness of both NRCS and FSA programs. FSA loans can be used for various farm purposes such as farm improvements, which would cover conservation projects and practices, and payment of costs associated with land and water development for conservation use purposes. Loan funds may be used to finance the producer's share of the project cost, and also as interim financing on the Federal cost-share portion paid upon completion of the conservation program project.

Contact the FSA or NRCS office for options available and further information on how FSA loans can assist with completing conservation projects.

## Beneficial Interest

For a producer to have Beneficial Interest in a commodity, the producer must have had ownership and control of the commodity at the time the producer requests a Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP); or for Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL's), from the time of planting through the maturity of the loan or the date of repayment, whichever is earlier.

Beneficial interest is retained in the commodity if all of the following remain with the producer:

- Control of the commodity, the commodity must be within their possession;
- Risk of loss;
- Title to the commodity.

For LDP's, beneficial interest must be retained in the commodity from the time of planting through the date form CCC-633EZ, page 1 is filed.

For loans, beneficial interest must be retained in the commodity from the time of planting through the date the loan is redeemed or the crop is sold.

Once beneficial interest in the commodity is lost, the commodity remains ineligible for a loan or an LDP even if the producer regains control, risk of loss, and title.



## Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium

The Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium will be held October 2 & 3, 2007 at the Beaverhead Golf Course, Highway 41 North in Dillon. Early registration is \$50 due by September 20. The Symposium is sponsored by the State FAC, MT Agri-Women, MT Farm Bureau Women, WIFE and the MT Cattlewomen. The symposium provides a platform for women involved in the promotion of Montana's agriculture to learn of issues affecting rural agricultural communities, promote leadership development, and further support women's leadership roles.

An agenda including the registration form is available at the FSA office or by logging into the Montana FSA homepage at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

## New Features on the Web

USDA provides their customers an opportunity to do business electronically 24 hours a day seven days a week over the Internet.

With a Level 2 access, USDA customers may receive their 1099-G form, review any collections or debts they may have with USDA and also review an itemized listing of their USDA payments.

Receiving a Level 2 account is a simple process. By entering your name, address and answering a few questions, customers may have access to the above mentioned items.

In addition to receiving payment information, USDA customers may also send forms from the comfort of their home and sign up for programs without visiting a USDA service Center.

Complete step-by-step instructions for obtaining a Level 2 access, retrieving payment information, submitting forms and signing up for certain programs is available by logging on to the Montana FSA Internet site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>.

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***Important Dates to Remember***

July 30 – August 20 – ECP Signup for Flood Damage  
September 3 – Office Closed, Labor Day  
September 24-27 – Tribal Outreach Forum  
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Agriculture Symposium  
November 2 – COC ballots mailed to voters  
December 3 – COC ballots returned to office

**MSU Staff Offering Borrower Training Session In Miles City**

MSU Faculty will be offering a one-day training workshop. This workshop will meet your borrower financial training requirements. This session will refresh and reinstate the importance of the “business” end of agriculture. It will also cover areas dealing with risk management and other available programs that could improve or protect your bottom line profits.

The class will be held on August 20, 2007, at the Holiday Inn Express at 1720 S. Haynes in Miles City, MT from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. There is a \$50 per person registration fee, which includes your lunch. Make your checks payable to MSU and remit it to the local FSA office at 3120 Valley Drive East in Miles City, MT. Call 406-232-7905 if you have further questions.

**Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA programs should  
contact Dale E. Barta, CED, 3120 Valley Drive East, Miles City, MT 59301  
Phone – 406-232-7905 or E-Mail – dale.barta@mt.usda.gov**